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WHY SEEK MOSS?

Writer Takes Issue With Old, Well-Worn Proverb.

Keep Rolling Until a Good Place to Stop is Found, Is Advice He Hands Out.

"The rolling stone," we are impressively told, "gathers no moss." But who suggests that moss is a desirable article to accumulate? Uncle Dudley writes in the Boston Globe.

One of the penalties of being young is having it dinged into our ears: "You ought to settle down."

When ought I to settle down? At eighteen? At twenty-five? At thirty-five? If "settling down" is taken to mean what it means on most lips one ought never to settle down at all. For on most lips "settling down" means nothing more nor less than stale stagnation.

Every intelligent reader knows that many, if not most, of his luckiest finds have come while browsing along the book shelves. To be sure, one needs to know how to use a library; how to choose a topic and use catalogues and indexes to dig up the material. But there is something to be got by personal contact with the book shelves which no catalogue can give. You wander along, plucking down now this volume, now that. That one is mildly entertaining; this one is dull; another might be valuable, when—Hello! Here it is! Every page emblazoned as with letters of gold; and the day on which you discovered it was one of the high days.

There are a few fortunate people whose natural bent is so pronounced that they know at quite an early age exactly what they wish to do as a life work. But such people are relatively few.

Do they tell you that it is important to get your life work started early? It is far more important to find the life work which you were meant to do, whether you find it early or late. One ought never to be so settled down that he cannot take up a new kind of work if he is convinced that it is more valuable to himself or to the community than the kind he is in; convinced, in short, that it provides a better outlet for his powers.

The spectacle of a man or woman tied for life to the wrong mate is not half so pitiable as the spectacle of a man or woman tied for life to the wrong job.

The father who says to the son in his teens or early 20s, "It is high time you made up your mind what you are going to do," is as ridiculous as a physician telling a baby it is high time he went out for the football team. In one's teens or twenties it is, to be sure, high time one is busy and active about some sort of productive labor, but to suggest that the job at this age should be one's permanent choice is ruinous folly. It may prove to be the very thing, but if it should not, one will want an emergency exit.

Does it ever occur to us that the hope of the world lies mainly in just these untamed spirits who refuse to settle down?

Valparaiso Outdoor Elevators.

Sailors attached to the United States fleet that is now cruising up the west coast of South America will find a familiar feature about the port of Valparaiso, in the event that their home town is Pittsburgh or Cincinnati. For the Chilean city has outgrown the confines of the narrow sea-level strip along the water front and has scaled the heights above. There is the finer residential part of the city, and the citizens, like those of the Pennsylvania and Ohio cities just mentioned, reach the level or business activities by means of the many outdoor elevators or "ascensors." The waters of Valparaiso harbor are so deep that breakwaters have been built only with the greatest difficulty. Instead of the ordinary blocks of concrete or stone, great hollow cement cubes, measuring 50 feet from corner to corner, are cast on shore, towed into position, and sunk by filling them with stones. Such a breakwater Gulliver might have described in his tale of the Brobdingnagians.

Phonograph Clock.

Little clocks and big clocks, slow clocks and fast clocks, grandfathers and otherwise, take a back seat before the twentieth century timepiece invention, just hot from the operating room. This clock "speaks for itself." Neither dial nor hands appear; the works are contained in a neat oblong box, measuring 16 inches in height by 10 in width and 9 inches deep. A handle appears at the side for winding purposes. A voice record is carried on a band of film, this band being very similar to the standard motion-picture film. A phonograph reproducer is used to translate the latent sound record into actual sounds. Precisely on the stroke of each quarter of an hour, the voice announces the correct time in deep, bell-like tones. A hidden button, on being pressed, will cause the hidden voice to repeat the time; while another button quenches its ardor very effectively.

Big Men for a Little Job.

The doorkeeper of the European hotel is generally a big man who will become a big man in addition to the requirement, he must be of more than ordinary intelligence, for he is called upon frequently to meet the guests of the house and to advise and direct them. This important post at the front door of a large Vienna hotel was recently vacated, and among the applicants were a major general, three majors and twelve captains.

A Disease, Probably.

"Don't you think bolshevism is largely a state of mind?" asked Mr. Gadsby. "No," said Mr. Dubwaite. "I don't believe a mere state of mind could make people talk and act the way Bolshevists do. It must be constitutional."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

TWO FAMOUS YANKEE SHIPS

Old Gunboat Marblehead and Cutter Bear, in Humble Service, Still Are "Making Good."

Trading along the west Mexican coast carrying panocha, hides, beeswax and other freight is the fate of the once proud American gunboat Marblehead.

The vessel has been sold to Jose Delave, a Mazatlan ship operator, by the United States government for a few thousand Mexican dollars. Delave has renamed the Marblehead the Agua Prieta.

Thus passes the old "pepperbox." Capt. Bowman H. McCalla's ship of Spanish war fame, with a proud record of achievement right up to the days of the last Victory loan drive, when the Marblehead left San Francisco as the navy's "victory ship," remarks Our Navy.

The announcement of coast guard authorities that the U. S. C. G. cutter Bear probably never will sail into the North again marks a sharp turn in the history of one of the most famous adventure ships flying the American flag.

After more than two-score years of battling with ice floes and arctic gales, the Bear is under orders to make San Diego her base and serve as a training ship for coast guard recruits.

Since the Bear, in charge of Commodore Schley, later admiral, rescued the seven survivors of the Greeley arctic expedition in 1884 she has been devoted to service in the northern seas with the navy, the frontier revenue service and in recent years as part of the coast guard fleet. She was built in Scotland in 1874 as a whaler and sealer.

The full story of her career would constitute a library of stirring tales. Among her many duties she has kept watch and ward over the Eskimos, carried the law to the shores where Kipling said no law extended, protected the fur-seal herd from poachers of the "Sea Wolf" type, and given the sanction of the white man's standards to marriages beyond the arctic circle.

Natives, teachers, missionaries, traders and marines in the North have for a generation regarded the annual cruise of the Bear as a routine part of their existence.

Not a season has passed—including the present one—that the Bear has not saved lives by imperative operations performed in her sick bay, by the rescue of marooned or shipwrecked crews or by landing provisions to the inhabitants of isolated shores.

Reforesting the Plains.

In the state of Nebraska there are twenty thousand square miles of country that is absolutely treeless. The soil is nothing but sand on which no plant grows except a long grass that is good for grazing.

Anciently, perhaps seven million years ago, the area in question was part of the floor of a sea. Hence, of course, the sand. But within comparatively recent times the region must have been forested, for here and there are discovered stumps of trees as much as two feet in diameter.

Discovery of these old stumps led the United States forest service to believe that trees might be made to grow there again. Accordingly, the experiment was begun about eighteen years ago, and as a result, about five thousand acres of young forest have been successfully established. Some of the trees today are as much as twenty-five feet high.

The trees planted in this area are all of them of coniferous varieties—jack pine, Norway pine and yellow pine. At Halsey, Neb., is maintained a nursery, which produces two million of these little trees each year.

For planting them, a novel method is adopted. Instead of setting each little tree in a hole by itself, a plow is run along through the sand, and the baby trees are planted in a row in the furrow.

Record of Sunshine.

J. B. Kincer of the weather bureau has just published in the Monthly Weather Review a valuable analysis of the available sunshine records of this country. He presents charts and graphs showing for all parts of the United States the mean solar time of sunrise and sunset, the average length of the day, sunrise to sunset, for different seasons of the year; the average for each month in the year; the daily amounts of sunshine in hours; the seasonal and annual amounts in percentage of the maximum possible; the yearly percentage of clear, partly cloudy and cloudy days. Data of this character is comparatively scarce, for the reason that the instruments required to make these records are very delicate and require expert attention. A great deal of meteorological observation work is done by amateurs or volunteers who are not equipped with the necessary apparatus for accurately recording the periods of sunshine.

Genius Never Satisfied.

To get the product of genius you are never done. Work done must be constantly subjected to revision. Every time it is done over there is opportunity for eliminations or additions. Sometimes you will have to recast the whole thing as your study leads you deeper into truth. But what of that? The work you put on it will be forgotten in the joy of a more perfect production. Every revision shows where improvement is possible and the very working over makes the final result the more perfect. Young men have seldom patience enough to stick to a thing until it's put into its best possible shape. But the man of genius is never satisfied. To him work is never finished so long as improvement is possible. To him the ideal is the end to work for. Anything less than this is little better than an irritation.

Sleeping Sickness.

Medical experts disagree in their conclusions as to the exact nature of "sleeping sickness." Some forms of "sleeping sickness" are not unlike brain fever, while others indicate symptoms much similar to spinal meningitis. Physicians advise caution against undue exposure to the disease until more exact knowledge of its cause is ascertained.

MERE TOY NATIONS

Principalities of Europe That Seem a Joke.

Free and Independent, Though Not Much Larger Than Many Counties in the United States.

Historic background for Monte Carlo's national—and international—place in the economic scheme of things seems to have been discovered at last. A survey of the "littlest powers" by the National Geographical society, just published, finds that Theodor the Great was a man of most delightful manners at dice. He alone of European conquerors, it adds, gave Monaco respite from wars.

Theodor must also be conceded the title of "good sport," even in these modern times, for the geographers have found this comment on him:

"If Theodor loses, he laughs; he is modest and reticent if he wins."

But they could find no smaller nation to replace Monaco as the littlest power of the world, at least territorially, speaking. Its eight square miles, completely covered with gaming tables in popular fancy, is unmatched down the scale, its population of 23,000 defies comparison. Imports include visitors, 2,000,000 of them in 1913; revenues come from visiting bank rolls, it appears, and exports are chiefly bulging pockets or blasted hopes.

San Marino, completely surrounded by Italy, stands next with 35,000 square miles, the geographic experts state, and is remarkable chiefly because it has virtually no police force. Reason for this is found in the retiring and peace-loving disposition of the good saint after whom the little republic is named, for, having finished helping oppressed Christians to wall in the city of Rimini, San Marino retired to this spot, so the legend goes, to solitude and simple living, and taught his people to make war only in self-defense.

Andorra, a bit of Spain, 191 square miles in size and 10,000 feet in air, in the heart of the Pyrenees, is enrolled with the little powers. It is ruled by a first syndicate and smuggling is the national topic of conversation, it is asserted, and this route between France and Spain is said to have been much patronized during the war in that way.

Then there is Lichtenstein, sixty-five square miles, surrounded by Switzerland and Austria, which finds it unnecessary to have any army at all, since 1886.

Luxemburg, well and favorably known to the American soldiers who tramped through it en route to the Rhine; the occupied zone along the great German river and Turkey in Europe, reduced to the environs west of Constantinople, also are noted among possible "little powers;" but one name has been dropped from the roll, Montenegro, now part of the kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

Smugglers in Clover.

Smuggling over the Dutch and Danish frontiers, which the German government had gone to great efforts to suppress, again is flourishing "on a colossal scale," and at some points with the full knowledge and connivance of many government officials, according to reports.

Smugglers are declared to be outbidding the government for the aid of dishonest officials, and the "veritable army of customs officers on the border have permitted millions of marks' worth of tobacco, cigarettes, coffee and sugar to cross the border duty free within the last few months."

Flying squadrons of customs officers have been organized by the government "to catch the smugglers," who are said to have so thoroughly systematized their operations that "customs receipts are rapidly falling back to nothing, for custom control is again only on paper."

Enter the Rouged Ankle.

Introducing a new fad for midday—rouged ankles.

Not content with carmine lips and blushing pink cheeks, latest fashions have decreed for ankles of a delicate pink. At Second street and Broadway, the "advance guard" of Los Angeles' elite made her appearance the other day with spider-web hose and her ankles tinted a delicate pink.

Mere men gasped and halted as the vision, attired in the most fashionable garb, alighted from a street car and unblushingly made her way through the throng that quickly gathered.

There was no mistake—the ankles were rouged and the young woman, according to modistes, was but the first of the thousands of young women who will take up the fad.—Los Angeles Express.

What For?

Ellery Sedgwick, the Boston editor, detests the best-seller type of novelist and avails himself of every opportunity to rap best sellers over the knuckles.

Mr. Sedgwick, at a Cambridge tea, was approached by a best-seller novelist.

"Say, old man," the best seller began, "I'll be sending you a thing or two of mine one of these days. I suppose you know about the success of my best yarn? No? Well, by gosh, she's translated into French, German, Spanish and Chinese."

"Why don't you get somebody to translate her into English?" said Mr. Sedgwick dryly.

Woman's Responsible Position.

Miss Sophie H. Hamant is the only woman among six persons handling a foreign exchange department in this country. She manages such a department in the office of the Cincinnati representative of the Guaranty Trust company of New York. One hundred and thirty-five banks, merchants, and manufacturers depend on Miss Hamant for their daily information about foreign exchange rates.

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